

FOSTER SCHOOL DEPARTMENT
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Captain Isaac Paine School
160 Foster Center Road
Foster, RI 02825

January 28, 2010
Open Session - 5:00 pm

1. Convene Meeting – Chair, Ron Cervasio, called the meeting of the Foster School committee to order at 5:01 pm.

a. Roll Call – All members were present: Ron Cervasio, Chair, Cindy Bernard, C-Chair, Dennis Chretien, member, and Dr. Davida Irving, Superintendent/Principal.

b. Pledge of Allegiance – was recited.

2. Requests to Use School Facilities – On a motion by Mr. Chretien and seconded by Mrs. Bernard, the School Committee approved the request of the Emergency Shelter Team to use the school facilities on Saturday, February 13th for the H1N1 clinic for adults eighteen years and older. Vote = 3-0-0. Motion passed.

3. Approval of Minutes – On a motion by Mrs. Bernard and seconded by Mr. Chretien the School Committee approved the Minutes of December 22, 2009. Motion passed. Vote = 2-0-1. Vote as follows:

Mr. Cervasio – yes

Mrs. Bernard – abstained

Mr. Chretien - yes

4. Approval of Warrants – On a motion by Mr. Chretien and seconded by Mr. Cervasio, the School Committee approved the warrant for \$206,566.14. Motion passed. Vote = 2-0-1.

Vote as follows:

Mr. Cervasio – yes

Mrs. Bernard – recuses

Mr. Chretien - yes

5. Old Business (for discussion/action)

a. Foster and Glocester Resource Sharing – Dr. Irving reported to the School Committee that she met with Dr. Michael Barnes and Ms. Patricia DuBois a day earlier and discussed future cost sharing ideas. No decisions were made. Technology, busing, and grounds facilities were some areas that they discussed sharing.

b. School Maintenance – Dr. Irving asked the school committee to approve the needed replacement of five fire-rated doors at an estimated cost of \$2937.00 and would like to have the work done over the winter break in February. Mr. Chretien made a motion to approve the replacement of the doors as presented, Mrs. Bernard seconded. Motion approved. Vote = 3-0-0. The Superintendent asked the School Committee to approve her request to put out to bid the painting of the full interior of the school. Mrs. Bernard made a motion to advertisement a bid for the painting of the school, RFP, Mr. Chretien seconded. Motion passed. Vote = 3-0-0.

c. Budget FY 2009-2010 – Malcolm Moore, Business Manager, explained why the deletion of a bus was not accomplished and the need to take these funds out of the surplus. The bus had been taken out of the approved budget but had not been taken any further. On a motion

by Mr. Chretien and seconded by Mr. Cervasio, the School Committee approved the appropriation of money from surplus to pay for the deficit resulting from keeping buses that were removed from the budget. Motion passed. Vote = 2-0-1.

Vote as follows:

Mr. Cervasio – yes

Mrs. Bernard – recuses

Mr. Chretien - yes

d. School Calendar 2009-2010 – Mr. Chretien made a motion to adjust the school calendar to reflect what the Regional School Committee approved at the region which were February 12th and April 1st as no school days, Mrs. Bernard seconded. Motion passed. Vote = 3-0-0.

6. New business (for discussion)

a. Joint School Committee Meeting – Mr. Cervasio put this item on the agenda because he would like to have a joint meeting of the Glocester School Committee, the Regional School Committee and the Scituate School Committee in order to discuss shared resources, common interests and education etc. Mr. Cervasio will send a letter to the other Chairs to see if they are interested. However, Mr. Cervasio said his idea for resource sharing was not to eliminate a teacher.

b. Late Bus Policy – Dr. Irving relayed to the School Committee that she has been able to have a separate late bus for students staying after at the high school rather than the late bus bringing those students to the elementary school and riding home with elementary students. However, there have been a few glitches; one being that students are dropped off too far from their homes and the other is they are on the bus too long. The transportation policy, #3541.2, states that students, grade 6 through 12, will be dropped only one mile from their home and be on the bus no longer than one hour. Because of the way this policy is, Dr. Irving would like a separate policy for late bus. This being a regional issue, although Foster pays for the late bus, Dr. Irving felt it would be good to discuss a solution with Dr. Barnes. A lengthy discussion followed. The School Committee suggested that Dr. Irving work with Dr. Barnes on this issue. No votes were taken.

c. Budget FY 2010-2011 – Dr. Irving reviewed with the School Committee several scenarios; one version - to cut Art and Music from 4 days to 3 and eliminate Foreign Language, second version – cut one bus and one monitor, reduce the Art and Music by one day and cut Foreign Language, third version – where there are absolutely no increases for the 10-11 school year. Dr. Irving's recommendation to the School Committee is to approve a budget of a 2.94% which removes one bus and one bus monitor. The reason for the increase is the need to add one first grade teacher due to there being three current kindergarten classes and contractual obligations. Mr. Chretien moved to accept that budget as presented. There was no second, motion failed. Dr. Irving then recommended the School Committee approved her version of the budget at a 0% increase, which decrease Art and Music by one day plus eliminates foreign language, a bus and a monitor using a carry over. Mrs. Bernard made a motion to accept a zero zero percent increase for the school budget, Mr. Chretien seconded. Mr. Chretien amended the motion to restore the carry over (from surplus) and Foreign Language, Music, and Art. Mrs. Bernard seconded. Mr. Chretien felt this version would better serve the school department if the Town Council votes to cut further. Mr. Cervasio would rather the School Committee pass a zero budget which is a true 2% inflation being an \$85,000 decrease. By presenting a zero budget the Town Council would not be able to decrease further and the surplus can be applied at a later time should there be a need. Vote = 1-2-0. Amended motion failed.

Vote as follows:

Mr. Cervasio – no

Mrs. Bernard – no

Mr. Chretien – yes

Mr. Cervasio amended the main motion to put forth a pure zero percent budget with no surplus transfer. Mrs. Bernard seconded. Mr. Chretien said that this amendment means Dr. Irving cannot use the surplus carry over which will eliminate more from the budget for next year. Mr. Cervasio stated he wanted the Superintendent to work her magic and if that fails and when the school committee knows what the surplus is later on, that he would have no problem approving the transfer of dollars at that time. Dr. Irving stated that she was caught off guard and that after having individual conversations with the school committee members, she understood that using the surplus was acceptable. Mr. Chretien stated that by approving this amendment the future School Committee will increase by $\frac{1}{4}\%$ less of a much smaller number, meaning that there would be a declining percent of a declining amount and that this School Committee is setting up the potential that there is no option to raise the money. Mr. Cervasio agreed. Vote = 1-2-0.

Amended motion failed.

Vote as follows:

Mr. Cervasio – no

Mrs. Bernard – yes

Mr. Chretien – no

Mr. Cervasio called for the main motion, which was Dr. Irving's recommendation the School Committee approved her version of the budget at a 0% increase, which decrease Art and Music by one day plus eliminates foreign language, a bus and a monitor with the transfer of \$42,000 from surplus. Vote = 2-1-0. Motion passed.

Vote as follows:

Mr. Cervasio – yes

Mrs. Bernard – no

Mr. Chretien – yes

Dr. Irving stated that she will try to restore Art and Music and Foreign Language in after school programs. She and Mr. Moore, business manager, will better know at the end of this year where the school department's current budget stands.

d. Surplus Policy – Mrs. Bernard asked if the legal counsel for the school committee was coming. Mr. Cervasio did not know. Mrs. Bernard said that she had requested him to be at this meeting. Mrs. Bernard asked Mr. Chretien if he could get in writing that the Town's Solicitor would represent the school committee for free and that she would support putting that on a future agenda because in the past the Town's solicitor did not work for free.

e. Non-Resident Student Tuition Policy (#5119) – Mrs. Bernard reviewed some areas of this policy, and thought there were some legal questions that needed to be reviewed. She questioned how the tuition amount was established. Understanding Mrs. Bernard's concerns, Mr. Cervasio asked her to write amendments addressing her concerns and put it on the next agenda.

7. Communication/Reports

a. Correspondence – None at this time.

b. Superintendent's Report - Dr. Irving reported the following:

Race to the Top – the Teachers voted to participate and now the school will have a “seat at the table” for future funds and that this is a positive move. Commissioner Gist wants to recognize the Foster Teachers, so the next meeting of the Board of Regents will be held at Paine School on February 4th and will honor the Foster Teachers.

A School Improvement Team has been established and will meet on the fourth Tuesday every month.

Full Day Kindergarten workshops have had five discussions to date. Full versus half day have been looked at and discussed. A survey has been sent to parents of potential kindergarten for the 2010-2011 school year with the question of whether they would prefer full day or half day or no decision made or homeschooling.

H1N1 clinic, second round, was successful and was operated and handled by the school nurse/teacher Marianne Soscia.

Professional Development days established on the revised school calendar will take place on Feb. 12th, Writing Workshop and April 1st.

The Foster-Glocester Spelling Bee was held at the Paine School on Wednesday, Jan.27th and the Paine school were well represented.

Building Committee has been advertised and no one has stepped forward. This committee is required because of new regulations established by the state and is to set what needs to be done to maintain school facilities.

c. Public Comment – a member of the audience asked if there has been anyone to apply for non-resident tuition. Mr. Chretien stated that there were some inquiries a couple of years ago but none recently.

d. Future Agenda Items –
Non-resident Tuition Policy

8. Vote to go into Executive Session for discussion and/or action regarding those items of business referred to in R.I.G.L. 42-46-5 (7) Investment of Public Funds. No Executive Session was held.

9. Return to Open Session

10. Adjournment – Mr. Chretien motioned to adjourn at 6:43 pm, Mrs. Bernard seconded. Vote = 3-0-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Helena McCullough
Secretary Foster School Committee